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*On the Self-supporting Reading, Writing, and Agricultural School, at Wallingdon, in Sussex.* By MRS. DAVIES GILBERT.

[*Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association, at Manchester, 23rd June, 1842.*]

THIS paper was in continuation of the one communicated to this section at its last meeting, and showed the success of an experiment in fitting the children of an agricultural population for superior farm service, or for the cultivation of small allotments by an agricultural school. The master of this school is paid by the produce of five acres of land on the south side of the South Downs, cultivated by the labour of his pupils, 20 in number, who work for three hours each day in the afternoon, after instruction for three hours in the morning in reading, writing, and accounts, the church catechism, collects, and psalmody, on the national plan, under the approbation of the Vicar. He receives 1*d.* per week from each boy, but pays 3*l.* per acre for his land, and 10*l.* per annum for his house; making a total rent of 25*l.* The most peculiar features of his spade husbandry, are, stall feeding of the cows on straw, turnips, and mangel wurzel, and the use of the liquid manures from the cows and pigs, by which means he gets a profit remunerating his labour both as schoolmaster and cultivator. Indeed, the labour of 12 boys, of an average age of eight years, will repay the master by their three hours' labour in the afternoon for his three hours' instruction in the forenoon; and the school keeps up its numbers, because it is his interest to teach so well as to have many willing hands to work for him.

Mrs. Davies Gilbert has likewise made an extensive trial of the allotment system, under which her tenants have obtained 40 bushels of wheat per acre, and paid her double the rents of her great tenants; "weeds paying no rent." From upwards of 400 tenants the rent had been received for 11 years without one penny of deficiency; and the price of potatoes in the neighbourhood has been greatly reduced by the produce of their cultivation. These tenants are bound not to sell hay, straw, and manure; and not to grow two straw seed-bearing crops, without an intervening root or green crop for the cattle; and they are recommended not to grow any hay whatever, but to stall-feed their cattle in winter on straw, roots, and green crops.

*On the Destitution and Mortality in some of the Large Towns in Scotland.* By W. P. ALISON, M.D.

[*Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association, at Manchester, 28th June, 1842.*]

DR. ALISON referred, in confirmation of his former statements on this head (see vol. iv. p. 288), first, to the result of an inquiry into the number and condition of the destitute poor in Edinburgh, undertaken in the early part of last winter by a committee appointed to distribute a charitable fund, raised by subscription on the birth of the Prince of Wales, and by whom domiciliary visits were made, and uniform reports presented from all parts of the town. From these it appeared that 21,620 persons, in a population of 137,200 (excluding the garrison of the castle), were at that time in a state of utter destitution, and were recommended for immediate wholly gratuitous relief, besides nearly 5,000

more, who, not being so miserably destitute, were recommended for relief in the way of provisions and fuel at a reduced price. To the 21,600 are to be added the inhabitants of three workhouses and of the House of Refuge, making a total of above 23,000 persons, out of 137,200, or 16·8 per cent. of the population, who, during at least a part of the year “of necessity must live by alms.” Of this number, not above 7,000 are admitted as paupers to legal relief; so that 16,000, or 11·6 of the population, are, during part of the year, destitute from disability or want of employment, and have no lawful means of subsistence. The *pauperism* of England, of which so much has been said, extends in general to about 9 per cent. of the population; and most of the paupers are supported in comfort, and much care taken of their religious and moral instruction; but it appears from these statements, that the *destitution* of Edinburgh extends to nearly twice that proportion of the people; and, although Dr. Alison admitted that very few of them die of actual starvation, he asserted that many of them die of diseases partly caused by want of sufficient nourishment and clothing; that they are generally dependent on one form or another of mendicity; that the supply both of their bodily and spiritual wants is very irregular and precarious; and that they are in a great measure kept alive by the assistance given them by the working classes, even by the lowest and poorest of that description. Thus, he maintained, that the burden of their subsistence, although not allowed to press, as it would do in England, on the *capital* and *property* of the country, presses on the *industry* of the country, where its operation is both more injurious and more unjust. In regard to the effects of the Scotch system of management of the poor on the mortality of the great towns, he said that this could be best judged of in years of epidemics, because great part of the effect of bad management of the poor is, to render them peculiarly liable to suffer from such visitations. Although several extensive epidemics had occurred, since the English Registration Act came into force, in the English great towns, he could not find that the annual mortality in any of them had ever exceeded 1 in 30; but it had been fully ascertained that in Glasgow the mortality had reached this amount on an average of five years; and that in 1837 it had been 1 in 24, exceeding that recorded in any year in Liverpool (the most unhealthy town in England by reason of its number of poor Irish) by 25 per cent. He admitted that in the statements which he had formerly laid before the Statistical Society in London, as to the mortality at Edinburgh and Dundee, there had been an error from want of the proper deduction for still-born children, which had been returned among the deaths in the Scotch registers, and not in the English; but after making that deduction, the mortality at Dundee in 1836 (the worst year of epidemic fever there), appeared to be 1 in 30·1, equal to the highest recorded at Liverpool, which is a town nearly four times larger; and the mortality in Edinburgh in 1837 appeared to be 1 in 27·4, exceeding the highest recorded in Liverpool by nearly 10 per cent., and the highest recorded in London by 19 per cent. (viz., as 27·4 to 32·8). In regard to the greater liability of the Scotch towns to suffer from contagious fever, he stated that while the highest mortality from that cause, recorded in England, was 7·7 per cent. of the whole mortality, and that only in London and Manchester, and only for one year, the general proportion being about 4 per

cent., it appeared from various documents obtained by Mr. Watt, that in Glasgow, in 1837, it was above 20 per cent.; in Dundee, in 1836, 15 per cent.; in Glasgow, on an average of the last five years, 13·8 per cent.; in Edinburgh, for the last three years, 9·2 per cent.; in Dundee, for the last three years, 8·4 per cent., (the year of the greatest epidemic not being included in the case of either of the two last towns); in Aberdeen, for the last five years, 14·2 per cent.; and during last year in Edinburgh, 10·27 per cent. of the whole mortality. Even in Perth, for five years, it was 7·4 per cent. This evidence of the habitually greater extension of fever he considered of peculiar importance, *first*, because he had formerly given reasons for thinking the extension of fever in a great town more frequently dependent, directly or indirectly, on destitution than on any other cause; and *secondly*, because the mortality of fever falls heavier than that of any other disease on the most valuable lives in a community, especially on the heads of families. He then referred in proof of the connexion of those facts as to mortality with destitution, to the report of Villermé, on an elaborate inquiry into the comparative mortality of the twelve arrondissements of Paris, contained in the Archives de Médecine for 1825. It there appeared, that these districts of that city followed, with very slight variation, the same order as to mortality for five years together, the extremities of the scale being 1 in 45 for the first arrondissement, and 1 in 24 for the twelfth, and the mean mortality of Paris being 1 in 32·4;—that this order had no connexion with the vicinity of the districts to the river, or their distance from it,—nor with the degree of elevation of the ground,—nor with the nature of the soil, nor with the neighbourhood to, or distance from, the fetid marshes of Montfaucon,—nor with the purity or impurity of the water drank,—nor with the degree of density of the population, whether estimated by the proportion of inhabited houses to the whole extent of the districts, or by the proportion of the number of inhabitants to the space occupied by the buildings. By the true method of induction or exclusion it was proved, that none of these conditions determined the greater or less mortality of the different districts. But when the districts were compared with one another, according to the number of their *pauvres*, ascertained by the proportion of the inhabitants paying no taxes on account of their poverty, they were found to arrange themselves, almost precisely, in the same order in which they stood as to the degree of mortality, the three first arrondissements occupying the lowest place, and the eighth, ninth, and twelfth the highest place, in both scales. These observations, extending to nearly 800,000 people, and to five years, appear sufficient to prove, that the privations or comfort of the inhabitants are the main causes by which the greater or less mortality of the different parts of a great town, or of different great towns, are determined; and when these are borne in mind, the greater mortality (especially from fever) in the great towns of Scotland, will appear distinctly to confirm the conclusion to which Dr. Alison had arrived from other facts, that the provisions against destitution there, whether directed to its prevention or direct relief, are much less effective than in England. He fully admitted that various causes affect the lives and comfort, and even the degree of destitution of the lower orders, besides the kind of provision made against that destitution by the higher orders; that much suffering among them may be prevented by correcting intemperance,—much by religious and moral education,—

much by draining and ventilation, and other physical comforts. All these assertions are true, but they are not the whole truth. When all means of *prevention* are employed, we are still assured, by universal experience, by study of the physical and moral constitution of man, and by the warnings of revelation, that "the poor shall never cease out of the land," and that "the greatest evil of the poor will be their poverty;" much suffering will still remain, which we cannot prevent, and which it is our duty to *relieve*. He added, with equal confidence, that this relief is much more surely and effectually given in England than in Scotland; and that precautions and securities are known, by the prudent application of which, the regular and systematic relief of suffering may be prevented from having any effect in ultimately extending or perpetuating it; and on the contrary, may be confidently expected to act as an antidote to suffering in future generations, as well as a remedy for it in the present. He stated, in conclusion, that he had avoided any allusion to the inadequacy of the allowances granted to those destitute persons who are admitted as paupers in Scotland, or to the effects of such inadequate relief in the production of crime; but a striking illustration of both had been just put into his hands, and rested on the authority of Mr. D. M'Laren, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Smith, governor of the jail there. This was a case of five children of one family, who were in that jail at one time,—two under sentence of transportation for theft. It appeared that the father had deserted his wife with six children under twelve, one just born, in 1832, and had not been heard of since; that they had been allowed 2s. 6d. a week by the parish, which allowance had been afterwards reduced to 2s., (whereas in Manchester they would have had from 6s. to 7s. a week); that they had no other resource, and had been obliged to beg, and received hardly any education; and it was the conviction of those who had examined the case, that the children had been led to the commission of crime simply by the temptation to which they had been exposed by the mode of life which had become inevitable to them, in consequence of this inadequate allowance.

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*On Accidents in Coal Mines in Belgium and the Provident Institutions attached to the Mines.* Abstracted from the Report of the Minister of Public Works to the King of Belgium, On the Provident Institutions of the Working Miners, by C. R. WELD, Esq.

[*Read before the Statistical Society of London, 16th May, 1842.*]

THE coal mines in Belgium, previous to 1790, were worked upon a small scale, as compared to the extensive operations at present carried on. The opening of new roads and canals at the commencement of the present century led to a great increase in the demand for coals, and many new pits were opened to meet the additional consumption. The number of miners increased proportionally, and the frequency of accidents attended with loss of life, and serious injury, led to the establishment of provident institutions for the relief of unfortunate miners, their widows and children.

From 1821 to 1840 inclusive, the following accidents occurred in the coal mines of Belgium.